

REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Office Action dated February 13, 2009 within the three month shortened statutory period for reply. The Examiner rejects all pending claims. Support for the amended claims may be found in the originally-filed specification, figures and claims, and thus, no new matter is added by the amendments and new claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the telephonic Examiner Interview between the Examiner and Applicants' patent counsel on March 17, 2009, wherein the novel and nonobvious differences between the presently claimed invention and the cited references were discussed.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4, 10, 13-16 and 19

The Examiner rejects claims 1, 4, 10, 13-16 and 19 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0120526 by Altman et al. ("Altman"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,023,679 to Acebo et al. ("Acebo"), WIPO publication WO 02/29672 by Rosenbluth International ("Rosenbluth"), U.S. Patent No. 5,948,040 to Delorme et al. ("Delorme"), and Robert M. Coyne and John D. Burns: "Global connectivity" (April 22, 1996) ("Coyne"). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections but amend the claims in order to clarify the patentable aspects of the claims and to expedite prosecution.

Altman generally discloses a system for booking travel arrangements. See Abstract. Altman's system includes trip expense approval and a booking function. See paragraphs [0011]-[0015]. Acebo discloses a system for generating a pre-ticketed, booked travel reservation. See column 4, lines 37-53. Rosenbluth discloses a reverse auction system. See Abstract. Delorme discloses a travel reservation system. See column 6, lines 56-67. Coyne discloses that GDSs have multiple subscribers. Coyne, page 4.

The presently claimed invention includes, at least, "wherein the point of service terminal is configured to route, via the technology provider, a travel request to at least one of the plurality of data distribution systems based upon a comparison of the past travel information and the negotiated contractual terms, such that fulfillment of the travel request complies with the negotiated contractual terms," as similarly recited in claims 1, 4 and 10. As discussed in

previous Replies, this feature is beneficial in the travel industry as many travel purchasing entities (for example, corporate travel departments) negotiate contractual requirements with travel providers. Real time enforcement of those contracts enables a travel purchasing entity to more efficiently and effectively procure travel, while fully realizing any negotiated contractual benefits. Further, the presently claimed invention includes, at least, “a technology provider configured to operate independently from travel service suppliers.” By using an “independent” technology provider, the “negotiated contractual terms” may exist separate from a travel supplier, protecting what may be confidential terms.

Because the cited references fail to disclose or contemplate, at least these features, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 4 and 10 be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 13-16 and 19 variously depend from independent claims 1, 4 and 10, so Applicants assert that dependent claims 13-16 and 19 are patentable for at least the same reasons for differentiating independent claims 1, 4, and 10 as well as in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2-3, 5-6 and 11-12

The Examiner rejects claims 2-3, 5-6 and 11-12 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, Coyne, and U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0049693 by Pratt (“Pratt”). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections but have amended the claims in order to clarify the patentable aspects of the claims and to expedite prosecution.

Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, and Laster are discussed above. Pratt discloses an automated data processing system using relational database technology. The disclosures and contemplations of Pratt do not cure the deficiencies of Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, and Laster. Moreover, dependent claims 2-3 and 5-6 variously depend from independent claims 1 and 4, so Applicants assert that dependent claims 2-3 and 5-6 are patentable for at least the same reasons for differentiating independent claims 1 and 4, as well as in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 17

The Examiner rejects claim 17 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, Coyne and further in view of Russell Straayer: "Overview of Frame Relay" (March 1997) (“Straayer”). Applicants respectfully

disagree with these rejections but have amended the claims in order to clarify the patentable aspects of the claims and to expedite prosecution.

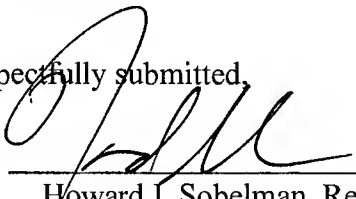
Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, and Coyne are discussed above. Straayer discloses frame relay systems. The disclosures and contemplations of Straayer do not cure the deficiencies of Altman, Acebo, Rosenbluth, Delorme, and Coyne. Moreover, dependent claim 17 variously depends from independent claims 1, and Applicants thus assert that dependent claim 17 is patentable for at least the same reasons for differentiating independent claims 1, as well as in view of its own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are allowable over the cited references. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the above in greater detail or deem that further amendments should be made to improve the form of the claims, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees due to Deposit Account No. 19-2814, including any required extension fees.

This statement does not authorize charge of the Issue Fee.

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Respectfully submitted,
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